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Tolson
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FIRST DEFENSE WITNESS

Oswald panel hears mother

LEE HARVEY OSWALD, the man accused of assassinating President Kennedy, was defended Feb. 10 for the first time before the Presidential commission investigating the murder. His mother, Mrs. Marguerite Oswald, appeared before the seven-member panel in an effort to prove her son was innocent.

Chief Justice Earl Warren, commission head, said after the first day that Mrs. Oswald's testimony was "helpful," but that it contained "nothing that would change the picture as I see it." The picture, presumably, is that drawn by the FBI in a still-secret report, though portions have been leaked to the press, alleging that Oswald was the "lone and unaided gunman" who assassinated the President.

Mrs. Oswald, appearing with a court-appointed lawyer, spent the first day discussing her son's history and their personal relationship. She promised to return with information that would contradict the official belief that Oswald was guilty.

LANE PRESENT: On Feb. 11 Mrs. Oswald again presented evidence after discussing it with the commission counsel and attorney Mark Lane. Lane had flown to Washington from San Francisco, where he had been on a speaking tour under auspices of the GUARDIAN and other groups.

Since Mrs. Oswald was represented by John F. Doyle of Washington, Lane did not appear officially before the commission, but submitted in writing two questions which she answered.

One concerned the nature of her confinement at a motel in Texas. At one point, she said, she sought to leave the motel and was escorted back to her room, with a Secret Service man holding her by each arm.

THE GUN: The second question concerned her discussion with Marina about Marina's questioning by the Dallas police Nov. 22 soon after Lee Oswald's arrest. She said Marina told her she was asked whether her husband had a gun. She answered in the affirmative. Then, when shown the alleged murder weapon, she was asked whether this was her husband's gun. Marina said, according to Mrs. Oswald: "I do not think that that is Lee's gun."

After his quick trip to Washington, Lane flew to Los Angeles for a meeting. He had spoken to 900 persons at a San Francisco meeting sponsored by the GUARDIAN Feb. 8 and to 1,000 students at an assembly at the University of California at Berkeley Feb. 10. Further speaking arrangements were scheduled for San

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LeRoy
Bloomington
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The Washington Post and Times Herald
The Washington Daily News
The Evening Star
New York Herald Tribune
New York Journal-American
New York Mirror
New York Daily News
New York Post
The New York Times
The Worker
The New Leader
The Wall Street Journal
The National Observer
People's World

Date Feb 13, 1964
National Guardian
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Oswald story

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Diego, Detroit, Cleveland, Milwaukee and Madison, Wis. His speaking tour will conclude with a Town Hall meeting in New York the night of Feb. 18.

CENSORSHIP HINT: The commission heard Marina Oswald testify the week before. If the wife's testimony, as described by Warren, provided no great surprises," statements by the Chief Justice himself certainly did. Warren's unexpected declaration that some facts about the crime "may not be released in your lifetime"—though later qualified—served to excite the very speculation that the commission was created to dispel.

Mrs. Oswald's four-day testimony confirmed earlier reports leaked to the press by the Secret Service: "She stated that while she did not like to believe her husband killed President Kennedy, the facts presented to her since the assassination would not permit her to reach any other conclusion," Warren said Feb. 6. The widow was first said to be convinced of her husband's guilt on Jan. 7, six weeks during which she was held incommunicado by federal agents.

According to Warren, the 22-year-old widow identified 145 exhibits, including the alleged murder rifle, during about 20 hours of questioning before the commission. She was accompanied by her lawyer and the Secret Service agents who have been her constant companions since Oswald was arrested a few hours after Kennedy was shot in Dallas Nov. 22.

The commission is charged with evaluating evidence submitted by the FBI and other police agencies indicating that the 24-year-old ex-Marine was the "lone and unaided assassin" of President Kennedy, and allegedly fired three shots at the Presidential motorcade from the sixth floor of the Texas Book Depository where he was employed. Following its investigation, which probably will last several more months, the seven-member panel is to "report its findings and conclusions" to the public. Warren's statement after the second day of Marina Oswald's testimony, however, indicates that certain of the commission's findings may be withheld if they concern matters of national security. Asked by reporters when the testimony would be made public, Warren said:

"Yes, there will come a time (when it is released). But it might not be in your lifetime. I am not referring to anything especially, but there may be some things that would involve security. This would be preserved but not made public."

MELVIN BELLI
A fair trial in Dallas?

He further emphasized his statement by adding, "And I mean that seriously."

On Feb. 5, Warren qualified his stand by stating he had been a little "facetious." He said his remark applied to only highly classified information and that "nothing of this nature has appeared."

LINK TO CIA? It is not known, of course, exactly what aspects of "national security" are involved in the Oswald case, though it is being increasingly speculated in responsible circles that Oswald was being trained as an undercover operative for the FBI or Central Intelligence Agency. If this were true and made public, it would generate widespread national distrust of America's "security" apparatus.

The trial of Jack Ruby, the nightclub operator who killed Oswald in Dallas two days after Kennedy was shot, is scheduled for Feb. 17. He will plead insanity. Defense lawyer Melvin Belli began calling witnesses Feb. 11 in a pretrial hearing in an effort to prove that Ruby would not receive a fair trial in Dallas.

In the last of a series of syndicated articles by Ruby, written with the assistance of reporter William Read Woodfield, the admitted executioner concluded: "Oswald was a dead man before I shot him." Ruby said he murdered Oswald after Dallas District Attorney Henry Wade stated that Oswald was guilty of killing Kennedy, indicating that he would not have done so had Wade not made his accusation.